



The Sequoia Collective

# Granola Antebellum

*A People's History of So-Called Bellevue*

Volume 1: Why Do We Write This?





Why do we write this piece? Because understanding the truth of this city is key to our collective liberation. The ability to view and assess local history and reality is a exhausting task because of intentional deception. Those with time and privilege to investigate are the ones who get to find the truth, and often they are the ones most incentivized to hide the truth.

Why call it Granola Antebellum? The Antebellum period was the pre-civil war south. It was that of luxury standing over violence with the content evil of intentionality. As the ruling class claims their allegiance to nature, while refusing to shift the dynamic of their consumption of the world, they cement the liberal appeal of their efforts. They jog next to homeless encampments of the former residents they gentrified out and write posts on Nextdoor talking about how they should make sleeping on sidewalks illegal.

Because the false outdoorsy act the rich put on means nothing in the wake of their global violence.

So, we write this to inform our community and give words to the reality of their experiences here in Bellevue/King County, in the hopes that it may lead to paving a road towards liberation informed struggle. The struggles the masses face have been designed, intentional, and purposeful.

They are rooted in structures and systems dating back to the 13th century and further, but they are not absolute.

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We know this area better than they ever will.

The local patriot front fascists, the boot licking 1980s-1990s white flight population, the Washington state republican party, the list can go on of the other "Neighborhood Action Groups" that have consumed Nextdoor, the high caste friendly "neighborhood chat board" app.

The thing they will never see, never feel, is revolutionary solidarity. For it will carry us through times of blindness, through times of silence, and through times of joy.

We are all running away from something, so why not run together? Let us run towards a new society.

However heavy the task of creating a new world may be, there is a quote that has carried me through the darkest of times; "ruins do not scare us, for we carry a new world in our hearts".

We choose to understand the historical context and lived realities of our community, and in turn, we choose to fight. The intersection understanding and action relies on the individual to want this world to be better.

They are simply roadblocks; the road is not destroyed, for no one may destroy the road of liberation. It is forged through raw willpower. Shaping this road shall never happen on accident or through passivity, but by active choice, and dedication.

We may choose how we militantly care for our community; may it be feeding, caring, teaching, fighting, or anything else. We may choose how we impact our communities, for even inaction is a choice.

This series will highlight a multitude of dynamics in the greater Bellevue area, in terms of the neighboring cities that interact with Bellevue the most and an analysis of the neighborhoods and communities within the city of Bellevue.

This piece is written by a group of local anarchists, mostly those who have grown up in Bellevue, that have lived inside the margins of the city, and those who have been forced into them.

The erasure of the working class in Bellevue is that of the ruling classes favor. To take things to their logical conclusions, the structure of the city that the city itself has tried to engineer, is that of a castle. An invisible castle. To allow the golden shore now known as Medina, Clyde Hill and Beaux Arts Village, and the suburban sprawl of techies be your understanding of Bellevue would be critically incomplete. It is to give way to the isolation of all those who live inside this silent maze.



# King County's History of Expansionism

If someone made it clear you were not welcome, without saying a word, you would not force your entry. You would go somewhere that you are welcome. To hide these invisible barriers beyond words is the great con in itself. As Fanon said, in *Wretched of The Earth*, to paraphrase, the colonists' sector is a clean sector. A place where the roads have no potholes, the streets echo no cries of hunger, and where the trash overflows with the most marvelous treasures. We write this piece for those who have experienced this silent segregation. We shall be speaking to you directly. Because we know you've felt it. When you think of where the colonizers' sector is, there is no hesitation of thought. Must we even name them yet? To understand these structures however, we must understand the decisions, and more particularly the violence; that created these circumstances to begin with.

We must not only see these spaces in an abstract, we must understand them in the context and history of the issues, violence, and contradictions, that were created, and fueled by the ruling class.

Of screaming into the void and knowing that the void will simply take it.

We are not going to fight because we think we will seek a utopian fantasy of revolution.

We are going to fight because we see in our hearts souls and spirits how much more we all deserve. We all carry this burden actively. And it is our time, our active choice of what we do with that burden.

The world grows tenser.

The climate grows random.

We all become hungrier.

Unless we make it change.

And the opportunity of this placement, it is almost that of the butthole of the Deathstar.

We are in the imperial core. Its weight is nothing new to us. We know who we are dealing with. We work for them.

We will take this global struggle of liberation to their front door.

We will do it through militant community survival structures. Of anything we can dream and create.

Of everything we need to create.

For if we do not try, because the odds were too great, we had lost our internal battle before then.



And we view these concepts of whimsy as so foreign, as time wins in our battle to keep them.

The yuppies and nimbys view the general crossroads population as transitional.

They view them as part of a passing frame of existence.

Not that of community, that of supplement.

Close to 20 thousand people in 8 blocks in the heart of suburban sprawl.

No main roads to other cities will connect you to it unless you need to be specifically somewhere there.

It has all needs nearby, creating an environment where the rich do not need to create commercial zones into their own neighborhoods.

Policing in the suburban sprawl is done through corridor methods going after pedestrians mostly, making fewer traffic stops. They don't know in that area if the person they're going to pull over is more powerful than the police.

Most of Bellevue's suburbs are in practice sundown towns.

Crossroads holds the heart of the trauma of the youth in the area.

It holds the spirit of rebellion and of isolation.

Much of this piece of enabled by the work of James Gregory, of whom authored the majority of studies used to create this piece. All of the work used will be cited at the end of the piece.

We must first look at King County. It was established in 1852 as the lumber trading center of the Northwest territories. Through territorial control against European expansion, the displacement of the Indigenous populations was seen as a strategic and decisive victory. 47 years after municipal colonial governments had been established, the territory was formalized into a state in 1889.

At this time, one of the initial ballot measures attempted in both Washington and Oregon states were to make them both all-white states. While only Oregon passed this initiative, the sentiment, and the weight of that, holds true.

Through the initial development of the county and the city of Seattle, white populations centered themselves around Queen Anne, Wallingford, Ballard, the U District, and Capitol Hill. These are neighborhoods that we now silently recognize as "old money".

As the economy in Seattle grew via the logging industry, there arose a need for workers whom the ruling class saw fit for such work.

The utilization of East Asian and Black labor was once more the fuel for white profit. King County, through its



existence both formal and not; has done most of its segregation decades in advance through zoning and development allotments.

From a work of James Gregory; "tight segregation remained the rule. Discrimination on the basis of race remained fully legal and widely practiced by real estate agents, landlords, white property owners, and neighborhood associations". There were formal nonwhite zones, and while most disbanded that "formality" in the 1930s and 40s, the results of this segregation last.

Two census reports from the Central District were 90% Black in 1970, and as of 2020 were 11% and 18% Black. In a flyer put out by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Congress for Racial Equality (CORE), and the Central Area Civil Rights Committee (CACRC), they state that Seattle had 13 predominately "Black" schools and over 100 "white" schools.

Before the beginning of WW2, the Japanese-American Citizens League (JACL) was established. The group was founded by Japanese-American and Japanese people, and they promoted civil rights more through community education and mutual aid, and less through confrontational politics or protest.

In 1942 all Japanese-Americans, at the time the largest nonwhite population in King County, were marched off

We write this so we may begin to be honest with the conditions we are forced to live in.

Day care will keep getting more expensive as conditions intensify. Our lives will get harder.

And yet we need not suffer.

The air reigns cold on most days. Even the hot ones. We all care for each other in an absolute way. It makes the anger hurt more. The anger of all of it.

We want spaces we can just exist. Where we can care, and be cared for.

We want time for ourselves and our loved ones beyond the things we are societally coerced to do by the American state and its economy.

We want to heal from the hurt that has laid at every corner of the places we have ventured.

We want systems of violence to shatter under their own evil. And our fury.

Not just state systems of violence. All. We want it all gone.

Yet we lose a conversation with ourselves, much like the one we are having with you now.

One of that of childhood whimsy. A concept so defined by our cultures decision that trauma is the only thing that may signify adulthood. That trauma is maturity. That callous is maturity. That stoic silence is maturity.



turn lying about how many people were in the building they raided.

In most cities, it is prohibited for police to use traffic cams to track suspects for active pursuit. In Bellevue, they were designed for that, having physical live video cameras as major intersections.

Bellevue College, the local school, had openly been making statements of their decision to "not work with I.C.E." while having plainclothes officers follow anyone who looked Hispanic or Latine home.

## Where Bellevue Is Now

We all walk in a silent death march towards an extreme climate reality right next to the wealth that can escape it. Was that not the goal of the greater crossroads neighborhood itself? To be the working class of the upper caste? We ask this knowing we both know the answer.

Our sense of community stripped by hyper concentrated policing both physically and financially.

Silence became a supposed word of survival.

Not love.

We write this not to incite a sense of defeat. We write this not to incite a sense of fear.

to internment camps. Over 7,000 families were sent. By 1950 King County had become 96% white again. There will be an entire volume on the relation of Japanese Americans to Bellevue, as well as other intentionally displaced populations.

Medina was initially known as the "gold coast". Not because of a gold rush, but because it was where the initial acts of white flight took place. Medina was planned out as a tax/wealth haven in 1914, and was incorporated on August 19 1955.

It was legally white-only housing until 1946 holistically. Clyde Hill is of a similar nature, but not as pronounced. Clyde Hill was 0.0% Black in 1960 and 0.6% Asian American or Pacific Islander. In the 2020 census, tract 241, Medina has 9 Black residents and Clyde Hill has 4 Black residents.

During the only protest in the city of Bellevue that escalated to a "riot" during 2020, there were images of Medina and Clyde Hill residents blocking the entrances to their neighborhood, from the single arterial that feeds through. They hoisted every gun they owned and fascist flags along with it.

The Beaux Arts Village, which is south of Medina and Clyde Hill but still on the water, receives credit as an



"arts commune" that was established under the nature of better living. It was also a white-only township until the mid-1900s.

A white supremacist township claiming to be an art commune.

## On Bellevue's Development

Now that we have touched on the surrounding cities and townships, we may move to Bellevue. First settled in 1863, it was home to a mostly farming community, but also to the wealth that wished to escape the urban chaos of Seattle, while keeping enough proximity to maintain control. Bellevue was a sundown town from 1863 to the mid-1930s on a city-wide level, and west of 140th was white only until 1947. Even going into 1960 there was a mere 0.85% Black population, and a 0.6% Asian American and Pacific Islander.

In recent years in Bellevue, fascism and white supremacy are at every turn. There is a single mosque that has been burnt down 3 times since 9/11, located just blocks from where I write this. Proud Boys have organized toy drives outside of Walmart.

The vision of downtown Bellevue during the few major protests in 2020 was a depiction of fascism at its finest; barricades at all the entries to the parking garage, the

national guard staging on the base level of said parking garage. Quartering off sections of the city to ensure that ketteling (a maneuver of encirclement) of protestors would be an efficient task.

There were armed counter protestors at every single protest with more than 40 people, as well as grossly-funded police in addition to the private armed security that nearly every shop has.

All police departments in the greater Seattle area have a cross jurisdiction agreement, meaning they can share resources (which former Bellevue police chief Steve Mylett once grossly referred to as "Mutual Aid" between departments).

In 2020 the Bearcats used by SPD at the western barricade and the week preceding were in fact Bellevue's, as were the police shooting 40mm "non-lethals" blindly into crowds.

Former chief Mylett said on a virtual town hall that "it depends" if protestors are members of the public and in turn if they should be treated as people. The new chief believes in a patrol doctrine of 2 unmarked cars for every marked car. Every officer makes a minimum \$104,000.

On multiple occasions, police have conducted "gang related" SWAT raids with manufactured cause, with armed check points in a half mile in every direction, with two Bearcats, lying about the total number of arrests, in